

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN McCAIN
CHAIRMAN, SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
FULL COMMITTEE HEARING
ON THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE THIRD ASSESSMENT
REPORT
MAY 1, 2001

- C Last year we held three hearings on the issue of climate change. Today, we hope to continue the dialogue on this very important matter confronting not only the nation, but the world.
- In recent discussions surrounding the President's position on the Kyoto Protocol, there were several questions concerning the availability of sound science in the decision making process. At this hearing we hope to have an open and frank discussion on the recent Third Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC efforts are recognized as one of the most comprehensive in this matter. It involves the work of hundreds of scientists from around the world.
 - The Third Assessment Report is an up-to-date assessment of published and peer reviewed policy-relevant scientific, technical, and socio-economic literature. The previous assessment report was issued five years ago. The latest report concludes that a firmer association between human activities and climate seems to have emerged. I look forward to discussing the basis for such a conclusion by the Panel.
 - I am disappointed, but not surprised, to hear that the most vulnerable to these changing conditions are those with the least resources. The report states that the effects of climate change are expected to be the greatest in developing countries in terms of loss of life and effects

on investment and the economy. Therefore, the developed countries, like the United States, must do its share in addressing this global problem.

- Any agreement on the Kyoto Protocol will have real effects on our economy. It is interesting to note that the report indicates about half of the emissions reduction targets may be achieved with a net economic benefit. This sounds like the basis for action to me.
- While we appreciate the work of the hundreds of scientists involved in this effort, we recognize that a substantial amount of research remains before we can fully understand this complex and dynamic relationship between the atmosphere, the oceans, land, and mankind. I plan to review the U.S. research contributions to this global problem to ensure that our contributions are helpful and adequate.
- I note that much of the assessment report is based upon computer models. I must say that I am alarmed to hear about the recent National Research Council's report on the short comings of the U.S. climate modeling program.
- We hope that today's discussion will go a long way in aiding this Committee and the Congress in crafting future actions to address this issue. I plan to work with the other Members of this Committee and the Senate along with our witnesses today to determine the appropriate next step in this complicated process of addressing a changing global climate.
- I welcome all of our witnesses here today.